The Censure of the

ROTA

Upon Mr MILTONS Book,

ENTITULED,

The Ready and Easie way to Establish

A Free Common-wealth.

Die Lunæ 26. Martij, 1660.

Ordered by the Rota, *that* M. Harrington *be desired to draw up a Narrative of this dayes proceeding upon* Mr. Miltons *Book, called,* The Ready and Easie way, &c. *And to cause the same to be forthwith Printed and Pulished, and a Copy thereof to be sent to* Mr. Milton.

Trundle Wheeler, Clerk
to the *ROTA.*

LONDON,

Printed by *Paul Giddy*, Printer to the *Rota*, at the sign of the Windmill in *Turne-againe Lane.*

1660.

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The Censure of the

ROTA

Upon Mr. *Milton*'s Book,

ENTITULED,

A Ready and Easie way to Establish a Free COMMON-WEALTH.

SIR,

I Am commanded by this ingenious Convention of the *Rota*, to give you an account of some Reflections that they have lately made upon a Treatise of yours, which you call, *The ready and easie way to establish a Free Commonwealth*; in which I must first bespeak your pardon, for being forced to say something, not onely against mine own sense, but the Interesse which both you and I carry on; for it is enjoyn'd me to acquaint you with all that was said, although I take as little pleasure to repeat it, as you will do to hear it. For whereas it is our usuall custom to dispute every thing, how plain or obscure soever, by knocking Argument against Argument, and tilting at one another with our heads (as Rams fight) untill we are out of breath, and then refer it to our wooden Oracle the *Box*; and seldom any thing, how slight soever, hath appear'd, without some Patron or other to defend it. I must confesse, I never saw Bowling-stones run so unluckily against any Boy, when his hand has been out, as the Ballots did against you, when any thing was put to the question, from the beginning of your Book to the end.

for it was no ſooner read over, but a Gentleman of your acquaintance ſaid, he wiſh'd for your own ſake, as well as the Cauſe you contend for, that you had given your Book no name (like an Anabaptiſt's child) untill it had come to years of diſcretion, or elſe that you had got ſome friend to be Goſſip, that has a luckier hand at giving Titles to Books than you have: For it is obſerv'd, you have always been very unfortunate that way, as if it were fatall to you to prefix Bulls and Nonſenſe to the very fronts of your learned Works, as when you call *Salmaſius*, *Claudius Anonymus*, in the very Title of that admired piece, which you writ to confute his Wife and his Maid. As alſo in that other learned Labor of yours, which you ſtyle *Tetrachordon*, that is to ſay, a Fiddle with four ſtrings; but, as you render it, a Four-fold Cord, with which you undertake (worſe then Captain *Ottor*, and *Cuthbert* the Barber) not to bind, but (moſt ridiculouſly) to unty Matrimony. But in this Book, he ſaid, you were more inſufferable; for you do not onely ſtyle your Declamation, *The ready and eaſie way*, as if it were the beſt or onely way, to the diſparagement of this moſt ingenuous Aſſembly, who are confident, they have propos'd others much more conſiderable; but do very indiſcreetly profeſs in the ſame place, to compare the Excellencies of a Common-wealth with the inconveniences and dangers of Kingſhip; this, he ſaid, was foul play, and worſe Logick: For, as all conveniences in this world carry their inconveniences with them, to compare the Beſt of one thing with that Worſt of another, is a very unequall way of compariſon. He had obſerv'd, that Compariſons were commonly made on the wrong ſide, and ſo was this of yours, by your owne confeſſion. To this, another added, He wondred you did not give over writing, ſince you have always done it to little or no purpoſe; for though you have ſcribled your eyes out, your works have never been printed but for the Company of Chandlers and Tobacco-men, who are your Statioⁿers, and the onely men that vend your Labors. He ſaid, that he himſelf reprieved the *Whole Defence of the People of England* for a groat, that was ſentenced to vile *Mundungus*, and had ſuffer'd inevitably (but for him) though it coſt you much

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much Oyle and Labor, and the *Rump* 300 l. a year, to whoſe ſervice it was more properly intended; although in the cloſe, you pronounce them to be as very Raſcalls as *Salmaſius*, and all the Chriſtian world calls them, if ever they ſuffered any of their fellow-Members to invade the Government (as *O. Cromwell* and others have ſince doue) and confeſſe your ſelf fool'd and miſtaken, and all you have written to be falſe, howſoever you give your ſelf the ſecond lye in writing for them again. After this, a grave Gentleman of the long Roab, ſaid, You had broken the heads of all the Sages of the Law, and plaid falſe in the very firſt word of your Treatiſe. For the Parliament of *England* (as you call the *Rump*) never conſiſted of a pack'd Party of one Houſe, that by fraud and covin had diſſeaz'd the major part of their Fellows, and forfeited their own right, by abetting the ejectment of the whole Houſe of Peers, and the greater part of their own (which was always underſtood to be the whole Houſe) with whom they had but a joynt Right. That they had been ſeverall times juſtly diſſolv'd by the Army, from whom they really deriv'd their Authority; and the generall Voices of the People, in whom they had declar'd the ſupream Power to reſide; and their own confeſſion upon Record in their Journall-Book. But this, he ſaid, you ſtole from Patriot *Whitlock*, who began his Declaration for a Free State with the ſame words; and he wondred you would filch and pilfer Nonſenſe and Fallaſies, that have ſuch plentifull ſtore of your own grouth. Yet this was as true as that which follows, *That a great number of the faithfulleſt of the People aſſiſted them in throwing off Kingſhip*; for they were a very ſleight number in reſpect of the whole, and none of the faithfulleſt that forſwore themſelves, to maintain and defend that which they judg'd dangerous, and reſolv'd to aboliſh. And therefore they turn'd Regall Bondage (as you word it) into a Free Common-wealth, no more juſtly and magnanimouſly, than other Knights of the Poſt do their feats, by plain down-right perjury. And the Nation had little reaſon to truſt ſuch men with their Liberty or Propriety, that had no right to their own ears, but, among the reſt of

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their Cheats, had defrauded the very Pillory of its due. This being put to the Ballot was immediately carried on in the Affirmative, without a dissenting Pellet. When presently a Gentleman, that hath been some years beyond-Seas, said, He wonder'd you would say any thing so false and ridiculous, as that this Common-wealth was the terrour and admiration of *France* it self; for if that were true, the Cardinall and Councell were very imprudent to become the chief Promoters of it, and strive by all means to uphold that, which they judg'd to be dangerous to themselves, and for the Interesse of a Nation, which they hate and fear so much as they do us; for if this Free State be so terrible to them, they have been very unwise in assisting it to keep out the King all this while; especially if they saw the people of *Paris* and *Burdeaux* disposed (as you say) to imitate us, which appears very strange; for by their history, any man would judge we had catch'd the disease of them. As for our actions abroad, (which you brag of) he said, he never heard of any where he was, untill *O. Cromwel* reduc'd us to an absolute Monarchy under the name of a Free state; and then we beat the Potent and flourishing Republique of the *United Provinces*. But for our actions at home, he had heard abroad, that they savoured much of *Goth* and *Vandall* barbarism, if pulling down of Churches, and demolishing the noblest Monuments in the Land, both Publick and Privat, (beside Religion and all Laws, Human and Divine) may amount to so much. And yet, he said, he granted what you affirm, That they were not unbecomming the rising of a glorious Common-wealth, for such are usually founded in Faction, Sedition, Rebellion, Rapine, and Murther. And how much soever you admire the Romans, ----*ab infami gentem deducis Asylo*, if you remember, they were at first but a Refuge for Thieves and Murtherers. In all *Asia*, *Africa*, and the New World, there is no such thing as a Republick, nor ever was; but onely that of *Carthage*, and some paltry Greek Colonies upon the skirts of *Asia minor*; and for one Common-wealth there have been a hundred Kingdoms in the World, which argues, they should be the more

agreeable

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agreeable to Mankind. He added, Commonly Republicks arise from unworthy causes, not fit to be mention'd in History; and that he had heard many Persons of Honor in *Flanders* affirm, That it was not the Tyranny of *Spain*, nor the cruelty of Duke *D' Alva*, nor the blood of their Nobility, nor Religion, nor Liberty, that made the Dutch cast off their obedience to their Prince; but one penny Excise laid upon a pound of Butter, that made them implacably declare for a Common-wealth. That the *Venetians* were banish'd into a Free State by *Atila*, and their glorious Liberty was at first no other, then he may be said to have that is turn'd out of his house. That the *Romans* were Cookolded into their Freedom, and the *Pisans* Trepand into theirs by *Charls* the eighth. That as Common-wealths sprung from base Originalls, so they have ruin'd upon as slight occasions. That the same *Pisans*, after they had spent all they had upon a Freak of Liberty, were sold (like Cattle) by *Lewis* the 12 th. The *Venetians* Hector'd, and almost ruin'd by *Maximilian* the first, a poor Prince, for refusing to lend him mony, as they were not long before by *Francesco Sforza* about a Bastard. The *Florentines* utterly enslav'd for spoyling an Embossador's Speech, and disparaging *Petro de' Medici's* fine Livereys. The *Genoeses* ——— But as he was going on, he was interrupted by a Gentleman that came in and told us, that Sir *Arthur Hazlerig*, the *Brutus* of our Republique, was in danger to be torn in pieces (like a *Shrove-tuesday* Bawd) by the Boys in *Westminster-Hall*; and if he had not shewn himself as able a Foot-man as he that cudgell'd him, he had gone the way of Doctor *Lamb* infallibly. This set all the company a laughing, and made the Traveller forget what he was saying. After a little pause, a learned Gentleman of this Society stood up, and said, He could not but take notice of one absurdity in your Discourse, and that is, where you speak of Liberty gloriously fough for, and Kingly Thraldome abjur'd by the people, &c. for if by liberty, you mean Common-wealth, (as you do) There was never any such thing, as either the one, or the other; unless yon will state the Quarrell at the end of the Warre, which is very senseless, and directly contrary to all Oaths and Engagements:

ments: or can prove that Hanging, Drawing, and Quartering of ſome of the People, and ſelling others as Slaves, for taking up Arms in all parts of the Nation for the *King*, are abjurations of his Authority; and he wonder'd, you could be ſo weak, or impudent to play foul in matters of Fact, of which there are ſo many thouſands witneſſes to diſprove you. But he was of opinion, that you did not believe your ſelfe, nor thoſe reaſons you give in defence of Common-wealth, but that you are ſway'd by ſomething elſe, as either by a Stork-like Fate, (as a modern Protector-Poet calls it, becauſe that Foul is obſerv'd to live no where but in Common-wealths) or becauſe, you have unadviſedly ſcribled your ſelfe obnoxious, or elſe you fear ſuch admirable eloquence as yours, would be thrown away under a Monarchy, (as it would be) though of admirable uſe in a Popular Government, where Orators carry all the Rabble before them: For who knows to how Cheap a rate this goodly Eloquence of yours, (if well manadg'd) might bring the price of Sprats, as no wiſer Orators then your ſelfe have done heretofore, in the petty factions, Greek Republiques, whom you chiefly imitate; for all your Politiques are derived from the works of Declamers, with which ſort of Writers, the Ancient Common-wealths had the fortune to abound, who left many things behind them in favour, or flattery of the Governments they liv'd under, and diſparagement of others, to whom they were in oppoſition, of whom we can affirm nothing certain, but that they were partiall, and never meant to give a true account of things, but to make them finer or worſe then they really are; Of which men, one of their owne Common-wealth Poets, gives a juſt Character, by ſorting them among the worſt of men.

——Ἰερόδουλοι, ῥήτορες,
Καὶ συκοφάνται, καὶ πονηρεῖ ——

All which you have out-gone, (according to your Talent) in their ſeverall waves, for you have done your feeble endeavour to Rob the Church, of the little which the Rapine of the moſt ſacrilegious Perſons hath left, in your learned

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work againſt Tithes; You have ſlandered the Dead, worſe then envy it ſelfe, and thrown your dirty out-rage, on the memory of a Murther'd Prince, as if the Hangman were but your Uſher. Theſe have been the attempts of your ſtiffe formall Eloquence, which you arme accordingly, with any thing that lies in your way, right, or wrong, not onely begging, but ſtealing queſtions, and taking every thing for granted, that will ſerve your turn; For you are not aſham'd to rob *O. Cromwell* himſelfe, and make uſe of his Canting with ſignall Aſſiſtances from Heaven, and anſwering Condeſcenſions: The moſt impious Mahometan Doctrine, that ever was vented among Chriſtians, and ſuch as will ſerve as well to juſtifie any proſperous villany amongſt men. He ſaid, when God puniſhes a Nation for ſin, The Executiones of his Judgments, are commonly but Malefactors reprieved, as they are uſually among men; For when he puniſh'd the Iſraelites for Idolatry, he made uſe of greater Idolaters then themſelves: And when he afflicts a people for their diſobedience, to a juſt Government, and fantaſtique longing after imaginary Liberty, it is with infallible Slavery, for their deliverers alwaies prove their Tyrants. This the Romans found true, for they had no ſooner baniſh'd their Kings, but they were in few years glad to baniſh themſelves, from the Tyranny and oppreſſion of their Patriots, the Aſſertors of their Liberty, and that very Conteſt furniſh'd their Free-State with Sedition, and Civill War for 500 years, and never ended, untill they were reduc'd to an abſolute Tyranny, under the power of that faction, that took upon it to vindicate their Liberty; He added, that he could not but ſmile at one thing you ſayd, and that is, That King and Biſhops will encroach upon our Conſciences, untill we are forc'd to ſpend over again all that we have ſpent, and fight over again all that we have fought, &c. For if you did not look very like a Cunning man, no body would believe you, nor truſt your predictions of the future, that give ſo ill an account of things paſt. But he held you very unwiſe to blab any ſuch thing, For that party you call, *We* have gain'd ſo abundantly much more then they have ſpent, that they deſire nothing more, then to fight over the ſame

fights again, at the ſame rate; and if you could but make your words good, he would undertake, they ſhould be the firſt men that ſhould ſet Biſhops about your Conſciences: for how vile ſoever you make the Blood of faithfull Engliſh men, they have made ſuch good markets of it, that they would be glad at any time to broach the whole Nation at the ſame price, and affor'd the treaſure of Miraculous deliverances, (as you call it) into the Bargin. This he added, was eaſier to be underſtood then your *Brand* of *Gentiliſm*, upon King-ſhip, for which you reſt Scripture moſt unmercifully, to prove, that though Chriſt ſaid, His Kingdome was not of this world, yet his Common-wealth is. For if, the Text which you quote, The Kings of the Gentiles exerciſe Lordſhip over them, and they that exerciſe authority over them, are called Benefactors: But it ſhall not be ſo among you, &c. be to be underſtood of Civill Government, (and to infer Common-wealth (as you will have it right or wrong) and not to be meant of his ſpirituall Reigne, of which he was then ſpeaking, and expreſſely calls ſo; You muſt prove that he erected a Republique of his Apoſtles, and that notwithſtanding the Scripture, every where calls his Government the Kingdome of Heaven, it ought to be Corrected, and Rendred the Common-wealth of Heaven, or rather the Common-wealth of this World; and yet the Text, does as well prove Benefactors heatheniſh as Kings, for if our Saviour had meant to brand Kingſhip with any evill Character, He would never have ſtyld himſelfe King of the Jewes, King of Heaven, King of Righteouſneſſe, &c. as he frequently do's, but no where a State-holder, or Keeper of the Liberties.

To this, a young Gentleman made anſwer, that your writings are beſt interpreted by themſelves, and that he remembred in that Book, wherein you fight with the King's Picture, you call Sir *Phillip Sydnes*, Princes *Pamela*, who was born and bred of Chriſtian Parents in *Eng'and*; A Heathen woman, and therefore, he thought that by Heathoniſh, you meant Engliſh, and that in calling Kingſhip, Heatheniſh, you inferd, it was the only proper and naturall Government of the Engliſh Nation, as it hath been proved in all Ages.

To

To which another objected, that such a sense was quite Contrary to your purpose, to which he immediately repli'd; That it was no new thing, with you to write that, which is as well against us for your purpose: after much debate, they agreed to put it to the Ballot, and the young Gentleman carried it without any Contradiction. That done, a Gentleman of good credit here, taking occasion from the former discourse, said, you had shown your selfe as able a Divine, as a Statesman; For you had made as politique provision for spirituall, as civill Liberty in those pious and Orthodox, (though seeming absurd and Contradictory) grounds you have laid down in order thereunto, which being rightly interpreted, do say, or by consequence inferre thus much. That the Church of Christ ought to have no Head upon Earth, but the Monster of many heads, the multitude, who are the onely supream Judges of all matters that concern him; a Priviledge they claim'd, when he was upon Earth, when they took upon them to condemn him, and cri'd Crucifige: That all Christian Lawes and Ordinances have a Co-ercive power, to see themselves put in Execution, and yet they ought to be subject to every Man's will and humor, (which you call his best light) and no man to them but in his own sense. That the Scripture onely ought to interpret it selfe, (just as it can read it selfe) and every man is to take the interpretation in such a sense, as best suites with his owne capacity, or his occasions; That every man may do what he pleases in matters of Religion, but onely those that are in Authority, who ought not to meddle in such matters, as being of so different a nature from their Cognizance, (or any other) that if it be their will to Command the onely true Religion to be observ'd, it presently becomes inchristian inhuman, and Barbarous. That no man can serve God, nor save his owne Soul, but in a Common-wealth, in this certainty, you go after your owne invention, for no man ever heard it before: But if it should be true, it is a sad thing to think, what is become of the Apostles themselves, and all the Saints in the Primitive times, when there was never a Christian Common-wealth in the World? That any man may turn away his Wife, and take another as oft as

he pleaſes, as you have moſt learnedly prov'd upon the Fiddle, and practic'd in your Life and Converſation, for which you have atchieved the honour to be Styld the Founder of a Sect. All this you call Liberty of Conſcience, and Chriſtian Liberty, which you conclude no Government is more inclinable, not onely to favour, but protect, then a Free Common-wealth. In this, (he ſaid) you ſay right; For it is notorious enough, that ſince we have been but call'd a Common-wealth, ſuch pious Doctrines as theſe, have been ſo wonderfully propagated, that *England* does now abound with new Chriſtians, no leſſe then *Spain* did of late years, and of the ſame mungrell breed; all which agree in nothing, but the extripation of Chriſtian Religion, and ſubverſion of Government, to which your Diſcipline does naturally conduce. For certainly, the moſt ready and eaſie way to root out Religion, is to render it contemptible, and ridiculous, which cannot be ſooner done then by giving Licence, and encouragement to all manner of Frenzies, that pretend to new diſcoveries in matters of Faith, theſe will quickly make it become a ſport and mockery to the People, untill it be utterly extinct; And this, ſome of the Church of *Rome* found true, who gave a greater check to the growth of Reformation, by cloathing ſome of the new profeſſers in Fools Coats, and expoſing them to the deriſion of the multitude, then by perſecuting, and putting thouſands to death. And this is the way you goe which will never fail you, as long as there are Fooles and mad men to carry on the work. And with this if you could but introduce the wholſome Cannons of the Councill of *Munſter* it would make an admirable Model for the Eccleſiaſticall part of the Republique, if it were not for one unlucky Circumſtance, and that is that *Knipper Dolling* Proclaimed *John* of *Leyden* King, and not State-holder. This (he ſaid) was an unhappy miſtake and no leſſe out of your way then that of the Fift *Monarchy* Men, who would have been admirable for your purpoſe if they had but dream't of a fift Free-State.

By this time they began to grow weary of your perpetuall falſhoods and miſtakes, and a Worthy Knight of this Aſſem-

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Aſſembly ſtood up and ſaid that if we meant to examin all the particular fallacies and flawes in your writing we ſhould never have done, he would therefore (with leave) deliver his judgement upon the whole, which in brieſe was thus. That it is all windy foppery from the beginning to the end, written to the eleuation of that Rabble and meant to cheat the Ignorant. That you fight alwayes with the flat of your hand like a Retorician, and never Contract the Logicall fiſt. That you trade altogether in univerſals the Region of Deceits and falacie, but never come ſo near particulars, as to let us know which among diuerſe things of the ſame kind you would be at. For you admire Commonwealths in generall, and cry down Kingſhip as much at large, without any regard to the particular Conſtitutions which onely make either the one or the other good or bad, vainly ſuppoſing all ſlavery to be in the Gouernment of a ſingle Perſon, and nothing but liberty in that of many, which is ſo falſe that ſome Kingdomes have had the moſt perfect form of Common wealths as ours had, and ſome Republiques haue proved the greateſt Tirannies, as all have done at one time or other. For many if they combine have more Latitude to abuſe power then a ſingle Perſon, and leſſe ſence of ſhame, conſcience, or honour to reſtrain them, for what is wickedly done by many is own'd by none, where no Man knowes upon whom in particular to fix it. And this we have found true by experience in your Patriots and Aſſertors (as you call them) for no one perſon could ever have done halfe the miſchief they have done, nor outliv'd the infamy they have ſuffered without any ſence of ſhame. Beſide this, as all your politiques reach but the outſide and circumſtances of things and never touch at realties, ſo you are very ſolicitous about weeds as if they were charmes, or had more in them then what they ſignifie: For no Conjurer's Devill is more concerned in a ſpell, then you are in a meer word, but never regard the things which it ſerves to expreſſe. For you believe liberty is ſafer under an Arbitrary unlimited power by vertue of the name Commonwealth, then under any other Government how juſt or reſtrain'd ſoever if it be but cal'd Kingſhip. And therefore very prudently you would

would have the Name Parliament aboliſhed, becauſe it ſignifies a Parly of our Commons with their Norman Kings. But in this you are too ſevere a *Draco* to puniſh one word for holding correſpondence with another, when all the liberty you talk ſo much of conſiſts in nothing elſe but meer words. For though you bragge much of the Peoples Manageing their own affaires, you allow them no more ſhare of that in your *Utopia* (as you have ordered it) then only to ſet up their throates and Baul (inſtead of every three yeares, which they might have done before) once in an Age, or oftner, as an old Member drops away, and anew one is to ſucced, not for his merit or knowledge in State affaires, but becauſe he is able to bring the greateſt and moſt deep mouth'd Pack of the Rabble into the field; a more wiſe and equall way (in your opinion) of chooſing Counſellors, then any King is capable of. But he added, you had done worſt of all, where you are moſt like your ſelf, and that is in that falſe and malitious aſperſion of Popiſh & Spaniſh Councels which you caſt on the preſent King. For it is well known to all the world, he hath prefer'd h s Conſcience before three Crowns, and patiently endured to live ſo many years in exile, rather then change his Religion; which if he would have done, or been mov'd with ſuch Councels, he might long ſince have procured all the Forces of the Catholique world upon us, whereas it cannot be denied of his greateſt oppoſers, That they are ſo jealous of their ill-gotten Purchaſes bought with their Crimes, that rather be in danger of looſing a Pigge, they would (with the *Gergeſens*) deſire Chriſt to depart out of their Coaſts. After this ſaid, he mov'd the Aſſembly that I might be deſired to deliver my judgment upon the Book, as he and others had done, which being immediatlypaſt; I knew not (though unwilling) how to avoyd it ; and therefore I told them as briefly as I could, That that which I diſliked moſt in your Treatiſe was, That there is not one word of the ballance of Propriety, nor the *Agrarian*, nor *Rotation* in it, from the beginning to the end: without which (together with a Lord *Archon*) I thought I had ſufficiently demonſtrated, not only in my writings but publique exerciſes in that Coffee-houſe, that there is no poſſible foundation of a Free

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Common-wealth. To the first and second of these (that is the Ballance and the *Agrarian*) you made no objection, and therefore I should not need to make any answer. But for the third (I mean *Rotation*) which you implicitly reject in your designe to perpetuate the present Members, I shall only adde this to what I have already said and written on that subject, That a Common-wealth is like a great Top, that must be kept up by being whipt round, and held in perpetuall circulation, for if you discontinue the *Rotation*, and suffer the Senate to settle, and stand still, down it falls immediatly. And if you had studied this poynt as carefully as I have done, you could not but know, there is no such way under Heaven of disposing the Vicissitudes of Command and Obedience, and of distributing equall Right and Liberty among all men, as this of Wheeling, by which (as *Chaucer* writes) a single Fart hath been equally divided among a whole Covent of Friers, and every one hath had his just share of the savour. I told then, I could not but be sorry to find so learned a man so ignorant in the nature of Government, as to make disproportionate Parallels of Councills as you do, where you compare the Senate of *Rome* with the Grand Councell of *Venice*, between which there is no Analogy at all: for the Senate of *Rome* was never the supream Power of the People, as the Grand Councill of *Venice* is, but meerly a Councill of State. But I wondred most of all at what politique Crack in any mans Scull the imagination could enter of securing Libery under an Oligarchy, Seized of the Government for tearm of life, which was never yet seen in the world. The Metropolitan of all Common-wealthes the *Roman* did but once adventure to trust its whole Power and Authority in the hands of one Councill, and that but for two yeares, and yet they had like to have lost their Liberty for ever; whereas they had frequently in all ages left it wholy in the power of a single Person, and found it so far from danger or inconvenience, that the only Refuge they had in their greatest extremity was, to create a Dictator. But I could not but laugh (as they all had done) at the pleasantnesse of your fancy who suppose our noble Patriots, when they are invested

vested for tearm of life, will serve their Country at their own charge: This (I said) was very improbable, unlesse you meant as they do, that all we have is their own, and that to prey and devour is to serve, in which they have appeared so able and industrious, as if they had been made to no other purpose, but, like *Lobsters*, were all Clawes and Belly. For though many laugh at me for accounting 300000l. in wooden ware toward the erecting of a Free-State (in my *Oceana*) but a trifle to the whole Nation,) becaus I am most certain that these little Pills the Ballots are the only Physick that can keep the Body Politique soluble, and not suffer the humors to settle) I'le undertake that if the present Members had but a lease, of the Government during life (notwithstanding whatsoever impeachment of Waste) they would raise more out of it to themselves in one year, then that amounts to; beside the charge we must be at in maintaining of gaurds to keep the boys of them, and before halfe the term be expired, they would have it untenantable. To conclude, I told them, you had made good your title in a contrary sence; For you have really proposed the most ready and easie way to establish downright slavery upon the Nation that can possibly be contrived, which will clearly appear to any Man that doe's but understand this plain Truth, That wheresoever the Power of Proposing and Debating, together with the Power of Ratifying, and Enacting Lawes, is entrusted in the hands of any one Person, or any one Councill (as you would have it) That Government is inevitable Arbitrary and Tyrannicall, becaus they may make whatsoever they please lawfull or unlawfull. And that Tyranny hath the advantage of all other that hath Law and Liberty among the Instruments of Servitude.

J. H.

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